

CHAPTER 4

SAFETY AND HEALTH, AND WORK FAMILY LIFE COUNCILS

4.1 PURPOSE OF SAFETY AND HEALTH COUNCILS

The purpose of a Safety and Health Council is to monitor and assist a unit's safety and health program. Safety and Health Councils also provide a system for safety and health communication within APHIS. There will be both Agency wide, Regional, and Laboratory Safety and Health Councils. Deputy Administrators will determine if Safety and Health Committees are to be formed below the Regional/Laboratory level.

4.2 MEMBERSHIP

All Councils will have equal representation of management and non-management employees.

Management Council representatives will be appointed by the unit head. The unit head will also appoint non-management representatives when employees are not represented by an exclusive representative (i.e., union).

Where employees are represented by an exclusive representative, non-management members will be appointed from those recommended by the exclusive bargaining representative.

When employees of an establishment are represented by an exclusive representative and others are not, non-management Council members will be representatives for both groups.

Representatives on the APHIS Safety and Health Council will also be members of a field safety and health council.

Council members will serve overlapping terms. These terms will be for 3 years, except when the Council is initially organized.

The Council Chairperson will be nominated from the committee's members and will be elected by the members. Management and non-management members will alternate in this position. The Chairperson's term of service will not be for more than two years.

Safety and Health Councils can enhance communication between employees and management. These Councils will facilitate cooperation with management in improving policies, conditions, and practices based on employees' knowledge of workplace operations.

4.3 COUNCILS

4.3.1 National APHIS Safety and Health Council. This Council will monitor performance of the APHIS Safety and Health Program and make policy recommendations to the Administrator on the operation of the Program, and develop a Charter for its operational procedures.

- 4.3.2 Regional and Program Safety and Health Councils. The Regional and Program Safety and Health Councils are an integral part of the Safety and Health Program. The Council assists in the effective implementation of the APHIS Safety and Health Program within the Region or Program. A Regional or Program Safety and Health Council will:

Monitor and assist the Safety and Health program and make recommendations to the Director.

Monitor findings and reports of workplace inspections to confirm implementation of appropriate corrective measures.

Review internal and external evaluation reports and make recommendations concerning the safety and health program.

Comment on safety and health policy and procedures as requested by the Headquarter's safety and health office or the National APHIS Safety and Health Council.

Review Regional and/or Program responses to reports of hazardous conditions, safety and health program deficiencies, and allegations of reprisal.

Develop a Charter detailing its responsibility and operations. Council operations should not conflict with APHIS safety and health policy and procedures.

Maintain written minutes of each Council meeting, and distribute them to each Council member and the Safety, Health, and Environmental Staff (SHES). The minutes must also be available to employees.

NOTE: The Regional or Program CDSHO will be a permanent technical advisor on the Safety and Health Council, but will not be a voting member.

- 4.3.3 Field Federal Safety and Health Councils. Field Federal Safety and Health Councils (FFSHC) facilitate the exchange of ideas and information concerning safety and health throughout the Government. In addition, FFSHC assist agencies in reducing the incidence, severity, and cost of occupational accidents, injuries, and illnesses.

Managers are encouraged to ensure participation of APHIS employees on FFSHC. Frequency of attendance at FFSHC meetings should be in relationship to the proximity of the FFSHC to the APHIS representative. In order to facilitate participation in FFSHC, the appropriate OSHA Regional Office (see Exhibit 4.1) should be contacted for a current list of FFSHC Chairpersons.

4.4 TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

All APHIS, Regional, and Program Council members will obtain safety and health training within 6 months of an appointment to a Council position. This training will not be limited to, but will include:

Section 19 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act;

Executive Order 12196;

29 CFR, Part 1960;

APHIS Safety and Health Manual;

APHIS procedures for reporting, evaluating, and correcting hazards;

APHIS procedures for reporting and investigating allegations of reprisal;

Recognition of hazardous conditions and environments; and

Identification and use of occupational safety and health standards.

Training for Committee members at organizational levels below the Regional or Program level is encouraged, but is not mandatory. This training should include the items listed in the "training requirements" above.

4.5 TRAINING SOURCES

4.5.1 Training Sources. There are many different companies offering safety and health training and new ones appear regularly. It is very difficult to maintain a current list of the safety and health training sources, but the following are well established and recommended:

National Safety Council
1121 Spring Lake Drive
Itasca, IL 60143-3201
Phone: 630-285-1121

OSHA Training Institute
1555 Times Drive
Des Plaines, IL 60018
Phone: 647-297-4913

Local Field Federal Safety and Health Councils - Contact the appropriate OSHA Regional Office to obtain a list of local councils. Exhibit 4.1 lists the OSHA Regional Offices.

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
Division of Training and Manpower Development
4676 Columbia Parkway

Cincinnati, OH 45226
Phone: 1-800-356-4674

4.5.2 Reference Materials. The following reference materials are also recommended:

Accident Prevention Manual for Industrial Operations
National Safety Council
1121 Spring Lake Drive
Itasca, IL 60143-3201
Phone: 630-285-1121

OSHA Compliance Manual
J.J. Keller & Associates, Inc.
P.O. Box 368
Neenah, WI 54957-0368
Phone: 1-800-327-6868

Contact SHES for recommendations on current training sources and reference materials. Personalized training programs may also be developed with SHES for individual Council members.

4.6 WORK FAMILY LIFE PROGRAM

The W*F*L provides a catalyst for improving the quality of the work environment for all APHIS employees. W*F*L focuses on providing options and resources to create a lifestyle balance between professional and personal challenges. W*F*L is also charged with educating employees and management on the life style balancing options available within the Agency.

4.7 WORK FAMILY LIFE COUNCIL

4.7.1 The W*F*L Council is comprised of a diverse group of APHIS employees, with representation from all professions, grades, gender and races. Representation on Council is a collateral duty position and can take over 5% of the employee's time, over one fiscal year. Supervisors should encourage employees to spend more time on W*F*L matters, if job responsibilities allow. The Council:

- A. Determines special projects and needs to be carried out by W*F*L.
- B. Develops Wellness/W*F*L policy.
- C. Monitors the employee counseling and referral programs.
- D. Implements programs and activities as components of lifestyle balancing.

4.7.2 The Council will consist of the following:

- A. The W*F*L Specialist, who is a standing member of the Council.

- B. At least one employee from each of the APHIS programs.
- C. One employee from the National Association of Agricultural Employees and one employee from the National Association of PPQ Office Support Employees.

4.7.3 All members to the Council, except union representatives, must be recommended by their respective Deputy Administrator. The selection is based on:

- A. A retiring Council member may recommend to their Deputy Administrator a potential candidate.
- B. W*F*L can notify a Deputy Administrator that a Council member is retiring from W*F*L and recommend a potential candidate. The Deputy Administrator can either request volunteers from their program unit or select the recommended candidate.
- C. The ability of council members to serve a term of 3 years. Terms can be renewed with approval from the respective Deputy Administrator.

4.8 WELLNESS/W*F*L SPECIALIST'S DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Wellness/W*F*L Specialist is a member of SHES, and has overall responsibility for all W*F*L functions, activities, and policy affecting Wellness and W*F*L issues. Some responsibilities of the W*F*L Specialist are:

- A. Ensuring the appropriate use of W*F*L funds, maintaining the budget, and approving all transactions before acquisition. This includes travel.
- B. Contracting Officer Representative for the employee counseling and referral contracts.
- C. Ensuring that Wellness/W*F*L issues receive adequate management attention at all levels of the Agency.
- D. Ensuring that Wellness/W*F*L suggestions, recommendations, and concerns are promptly acknowledged and answered.
- E. Conducting periodic meetings with committee chairpersons and coordinators and ensuring that annual W*F*L meetings are planned.
- F. Monitoring Wellness/W*F*L activities, programs and projects.

4.9 WORK FAMILY LIFE COMMITTEES

There are four standing W*F*L Committees. They are:

- A. Caring and Assistance Team (CAT). Responsible for addressing care issues and establishing child care centers, and nutrition.
- B. Marketing and Communication Team (MAC). Responsible for WFL marketing and communication, planning workshops, developing information packets and assisting coordinators.
- C. Program Information Group (PIG). Responsible for monitoring the employee assistance/counseling services and evaluating employee needs. Also responsible for physical fitness, stress management, and smoking cessation.
- D. Supervisory and Employee Advisory Team (SEAT). Responsible for development of training and education, supervisors and employees informally prior to formal complaint process.

4.10 WORK FAMILY LIFE COORDINATORS

Work Family Life Coordinators are integral to the operations of the program. The Coordinators directly provide Wellness/W*F*L services/resources to APHIS employees in the field and at Headquarters.

- A. Coordinators will be appointed by the Regional/Hub Director to serve a term of 3 years. Terms can be renewed with approval from the Regional/Hub Director.
- B. Each Coordinator must have a copy of the Coordinator's Handbook.
- C. Coordinators must attend yearly Coordinators' meeting.
- D. Coordinators should attempt to participate in local/regional/state Safety and Health meetings.